



Fall 2009

National Service Recognition Day Largest Ever

Nearly 1,000 Illinoisans, representing AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs from across the state, dedicated themselves to a year of aiding their communities through National Service. The volunteers were sworn in at a ceremony held October 15 at the Illinois State Capitol building in Springfield, marking the 16th anniversary of the AmeriCorps program.



Governor Pat Quinn proclaimed the day National Service Recognition Day in the State of Illinois and congratulated Illinois' National Service family of programs, both past and present, on their service in strengthening communities through volunteerism in the State of Illinois. "National Service is an excellent opportunity for people to volunteer their time and talents, and give something back to their communities," said Ted Gibbs, executive director of the Serve Illinois Commission. "Illinois has a strong tradition of volunteerism and compassion for those in need. National Service volunteers make a real difference in the communities in which they serve."

More than 72,000 people of all ages and backgrounds are serving in 144 national service projects across Illinois. This includes 2,000 AmeriCorps volunteers, 18,000 Senior Corps volunteers and over 52,000 Learn and Serve America students. National Service Members serve their communities by improving education, protecting public safety, improving health care, safeguarding the environment, providing disaster relief and promoting civic engagement.



The Serve Illinois Commission, part of the Illinois Department of Human Services, administers 31 AmeriCorps* State programs in Illinois and is charged with enhancing and supporting community volunteerism in all its forms. Serve Illinois is funded by the federal Corporation for National and Community Service.

To learn more about the Serve Illinois Commission, National Service Programs or to find volunteer resources, visit Serve.Illinois.gov and get involved today!

From the Executive Director



It is with great joy that I write my first memo to the readers of Serve Illinois, in a very exciting time for service and volunteerism in our state, and nationwide. Governor Quinn believes that Illinois benefits when citizens, organizations and businesses work together and strengthen their communities through volunteering and community service. Upon the recent passage and signing of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, President Obama referred to this new legislation as “just the beginning of a sustained, collaborative and focused effort to involve our greatest resource – our citizens – in the work of remaking this nation.”

Earlier this year, the Governor and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) announced \$8.9 million in federal funds for Illinois’ AmeriCorps programs, including \$2.7 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The Serve Illinois Commission and IDHS are now awaiting further implementation details and final funding levels for the programs authorized under the Serve America Act and will do our part to bring additional federal resources to Illinois through these programs.

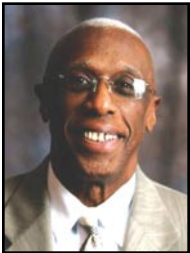
In conclusion, I want to congratulate the nearly 1,000 National Service members who took the AmeriCorps Pledge on the steps of the Illinois State Capitol last month in a spectacular event in Springfield. These volunteers dedicate a year of their lives – or more – to improve education, human services, environmental quality, public health and safety in their communities across our state. We salute all those, who through formal or informal volunteer programs and grassroots efforts, aim to improve services and quality of life across Illinois.

Indeed, the coming year will be a year of service – for all ages and backgrounds – in its many good forms. We invite you to participate with the Serve Illinois Commission in regional and statewide convenings on volunteer service in Illinois. For more information, contact us via the Serve.Illinois.gov Web site, or by calling 800.592.9896.

Sincerely,

Ted Gibbs, Executive Director
Serve Illinois Commission
Office of Governor Pat Quinn

From the Chair



I am pleased to share with our Serve Illinois readers that on October 15, 2009, Governor Quinn appointed 20 new members to the Serve Illinois Commission. These new members represent a diversity of organizations and areas of volunteer engagement and promotion that will strengthen the commission and bring us to full strength once again. We are pleased to welcome these new commissioners, listed on the next page, and are excited about the gifts and knowledge they will bring to better inform the work of the Commission.

We were also honored to receive public feedback to inform our work through the Serve Illinois “Listening Tour” held across the state in four locations in late August and early September of this year. Through these meetings, as well as a Web-based survey, we gained insight on issues of concern to you, our partners in service, which informed the development of a new State Service Plan which will be posted on our Web site once approved by the Governor’s Office and our federal funding agency, the Corporation for

National and Community Service. Please stay tuned to Serve.Illinois.gov for the final version and let us know of your questions and comments.

We have indeed embarked on a new era of outreach at the Serve Illinois Commission. Through new commissioner appointments, the Listening Sessions, and our regional leadership via the Volunteer Management Network and associated conferences, there are numerous ways your organization can become involved in the work of the state commission. On behalf of the entire Serve Illinois Commission, we invite you to attend an event near you and visit our new Web site, launched just one year ago, which is full of resources and links to organizations and opportunities to get involved.

Thank you for the work you are doing, whether on your own or through a formal volunteer program, in making our communities safer, stronger and more engaged through community service.

Sincerely,

Howard Lathan
Chair, Serve Illinois Commission
Associate Executive Director, Chicago Area Project

Serve Illinois Listening Tour

The Serve Illinois Commission held a Listening Tour throughout Illinois to gain insight from the public on what should be included in the State Service Plan for 2010 to 2013. The development of Illinois' State Service Plan will be the first step in promoting an ethic of service in Illinois.



The Listening Sessions took place in Malta, Chicago, Springfield and Mt. Vernon. A total of 158 people from all locations attended the Listening Tours. Ninety-one comments/questions were received at the Listening Tours, including those e-mailed or posted on *Serve.Illinois.gov*. The Listening Tour provided valuable feedback from the public, which helped the Commission create the new State Service Plan. The new Service Plan will act as a road map for Illinois to increase the number of citizens who give back to their communities. It will also include aspects of the new Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act. More information will be available at *Serve.Illinois.gov* when the State Service Plan is approved.

Governor Makes New Appointments to Serve Illinois

Governor Pat Quinn named 20 members to the Serve Illinois Commission on October 15. The Commission, supported by the Illinois Department of Human Services, enhances and supports community volunteerism and administers the AmeriCorps* State program in Illinois. "I am pleased to appoint these selfless Illinois citizens to the Serve Illinois Commission, which is dedicated to involving our young people in community service," said Quinn. "Now, more than ever, we need to band together to get our children off the streets and more engaged in our communities." The members of the Serve Illinois Commission are appointed to three-year terms.



Serve.Illinois.gov

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Howard L. Lathan, Chair, Chicago
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 Andrew Barbeau, Chicago
 Lawrence Benito, Chicago
 Julian Brown, Naperville
 Jocelyn D. Cheng, Chicago
 Merri Dee, Chicago
 Judy Donath, Springfield
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 Chris Koch, Springfield
 Michael Mangan, Mt. Prospect
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 Steven S. Wolfe, Glen Ellyn

COMMISSION STAFF

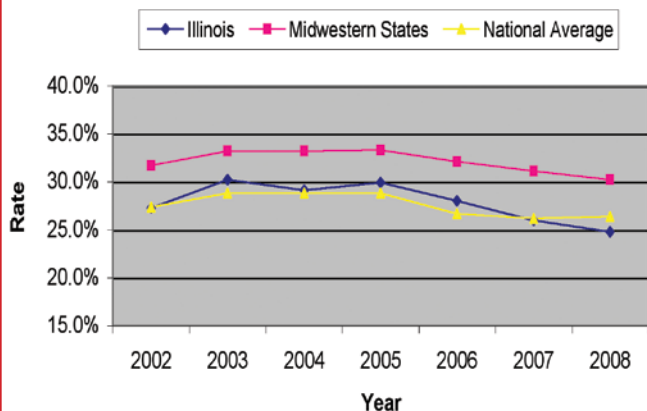
Ted Gibbs, Executive Director
 Lisa Hooker, AmeriCorps Program Officer
 Ebone Lott, AmeriCorps Program Officer
 Scott Niermann, Volunteer Programs Manager
 Scott McFarland, Resources & Information Manager
 Eden Lawson, Graduate Public Service Intern

Volunteering in Illinois

Trends and Highlights – Annual statistics based on 2006-2008 data:

- 2.6 million volunteers
- 26.3 percent of residents volunteer – more than 1 in 4 citizens
- 294.8 million hours of service
- 29.8 hours per resident per year
- \$6.0 billion of service contributed

Illinois Volunteering Rate Comparison



Other highlights based on newly released data:

- Even with the economic crisis, the national volunteer rate remained relatively constant, from 26.2 percent in 2007 to 26.4 percent in 2008. In 2008, 61.8 million volunteers donated approximately 8 billion hours of service in communities across the country.
- In addition to the 2.5-2.6 million adults in Illinois volunteering in 2008, an additional 236,606 individuals worked with their neighbors to fix a local problem or improve a condition in their community but did not serve through a formal organization.

Graph based on data from the Corporation for National and Community Service, Office of Research and Policy Development, *Volunteering in America: State Trends and Rankings*, Washington, D.C., 2009. More information available at www.VolunteeringInAmerica.gov.

LeaderCorps Class of 2009-10 Launches

Illinois LeaderCorps is a Serve Illinois Commission organized Council that connects AmeriCorps programs and acts as a liaison between Members and the Commission.

Vision: The vision of LeaderCorps is to foster effective cross program communication and collaboration among AmeriCorps programs in Illinois.

History: The concept of LeaderCorps began at the 2005 Leaders Conference. Attendees at the event were asked to generate ideas to help sustain the connections and collaboration forged at the conference. The discussion led to the creation of a Member Council that would keep Members from across the state in contact throughout their term of service. During the next program year, Members and Commission staff worked together to get the organization off the ground by developing LeaderCorps policies and structure. In the fall of 2006, Illinois LeaderCorps was officially born. Global Youth Service Day in 2007 was LeaderCorps' first statewide day of service project, and in the fall of 2008 LeaderCorps welcomed its first AmeriCorps*VISTA and *National Members.

LeaderCorps 2009-2010: Public acknowledgment of the 2009-2010 LeaderCorps Members took place at National Service Recognition Day on October 15, 2009, and the annual training was held November 11-13, 2009 in Springfield. LeaderCorps officers were elected by their peers at the annual training event. Throughout the service year, LeaderCorps Members will enhance their communication and leadership skills and coordinate statewide activities for upcoming Days of Service. (See page 8 for upcoming state, national and international Days of Service.)



MISSION

The mission of LeaderCorps is to connect AmeriCorps programs in Illinois through state, national and global days of service and to promote continued AmeriCorps alumni involvement.

spotlight Dynamic Duo



Clinton and Betty Ross have been married for eight years and have been Senior Companions for three years. The Ross' volunteer with the Suburban Cook County Senior Companion Program through Rich Township, located a short distance southwest of Chicago, Illinois. Cook County is the second most populous county in the United States. Together, the Ross' provide Senior Companion services for five elderly seniors who would otherwise be isolated and face great difficulty completing daily tasks such as grocery shopping, going to the post office and keeping medical appointments. The couple volunteers for a total of thirty hours a week.



The Ross' feel that volunteering for the Senior Companion Program allows them to assist others in need. They report that the program has broadened their horizons, causing them to be more aware of the needs of others and to be more compassionate.

In addition, the Ross' believe they have accomplished something by remaining active and serving their community. When asked about the clients they volunteer for, they report "the expression on the clients face when they arrive makes [them] feel good." Clinton Ross is referred to by his clients as a "gentleman of the first order," while Betty Ross' clients call her "the best Senior Companion in the world."

Before retiring, Clinton was a tow truck driver and Betty was a data entry operator. In their free time, she collects recipes and travels, while he enjoys golfing and swimming. The Ross' are sterling examples of dedication and service to others. Rich Township and the Suburban Cook County SCP salutes the Ross' for their dynamic volunteer service to the elderly in suburban Cook County.

- Submitted by Commodore Edmond, Director,
Suburban Cook County Senior Companion Program

More Volunteers Serve through Faith-Based Groups

According to the 2009 Volunteering in America (VIA) report (www.volunteeringinamerica.gov), over 35 percent of America's volunteers served through faith-based institutions in 2008. Further, 70 percent of volunteers who serve primarily through faith-based organizations continue serving from one year to the next. As a result, the Corporation for National and Community Service notes that nonprofits with secular missions are missing the opportunity for partnership, while nonprofits that do partner report greater benefits. Last year, Contact Ministries in Springfield served 1,312 families who needed help for the very first time. Below is more about this faith-based partnership.

Faith-Based Profile: Contact Ministries - Helping People in Need

The mission of Contact Ministries is to serve the greater Springfield, Illinois community by providing referrals, food, clothing, shelter, financial assistance and other programs, through God's love and compassion. Contact Ministries was founded in 1978 by five Springfield churches. These churches felt many of the poor and needy in the area had trouble accessing the social service system, and that one central location providing information could better help the less fortunate access services. Thus, the organization became an informational, referral and advocacy agency for the needy in the community. Contact Ministries works closely with numerous other local nonprofits, rooming houses and other local social service agencies to coordinate efforts to serve the homeless population as a core component of its services.



Services provided by Contact Ministries include employment assistance, budgeting, family literacy, parenting classes, tutoring, and case management with a goal of finding and maintaining permanent housing. Referrals are made for daycare, treatment centers, adult education, and other mainstream resources. Contact Ministries has also worked with hundreds of women over the years to make sure that five basic needs of a job, housing, transportation, childcare, and food are met to get them back into society successfully. The organization relies heavily on volunteers for some of its core programs each year.

- Submitted by Frederick D. Nettles, Jr., Director
Partners for Hope Program, Illinois Department of Human Services

Last Year (2008) at Contact Ministries:

- 5,366 people received food assistance
- 932 families assisted through Thanksgiving/Christmas programs
- 866 people received clothing assistance
- 251 people were helped with medical prescriptions
- 191 people received assistance with their utilities

New Programs in the AmeriCorps Portfolio

The organizations and programs listed below were recently awarded AmeriCorps*State program grants by the Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service (Serve Illinois) and the federal Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). These programs, along with 21 previously funded programs, were successful in a grant competition earlier this year and joined the Illinois AmeriCorps portfolio of programs administered by the Serve Illinois Commission. All will serve an important purpose in their communities, as described below.

The Academy for Urban School Leadership

The Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL) is a not-for-profit organization partnering with the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) whose AmeriCorps programs will provide special training for teachers using an innovative urban teacher residency program while transforming schools top to bottom through a school turnaround model.



www.ausl-chicago.org

Alternatives, Inc.

Alternatives, Inc. is a comprehensive youth and family agency whose AmeriCorps programs will focus on job preparedness/school to work, service-learning activities focused on violence reduction, tutoring and child literacy, and youth leadership and development.



www.alternativesyouth.org

Children's Home Association of Illinois

The Fostering Transitions AmeriCorps program provides coordinated transition services to youth receiving services at the Children's Home. Members will provide one-on-one and small group skill building sessions to help transitioning clients make gains in basic knowledge as well as the application of life skills that are critical to independence.



www.chail.org

Coalition of African, Arab, Asian, European and Latino Immigrants of Illinois (CAAAELII) - Immigrant and Refugee AmeriCorps

Since 1997, CAAAEII and its 39 member organizations have provided services to over 40,000 immigrants in the Chicago area. This unique coalition offers ESL, computer and leadership trainings to more than 21 communities speaking 13 different languages.



www.caaaelii.org

FORUM (Fulfilling Our Responsibility Unto Mankind)

To lift impoverished neighborhoods out of destructive cycles, AmeriCorps Members will deliver training, engage in direct outreach with youth and their families, and promote participation in community garden projects intended not only to beautify vacant city lots, but also to enable the community to literally begin "feeding itself."



www.forumdigital.org/temp/

Greater Chicago Food Depository

The Greater Chicago Food Depository supported more than 650 member food programs throughout Cook County by distributing more than 55 million pounds of food each year to feed those in need. Members will be placed in host sites – food pantries in unmet need communities.



www.chicagosfoodbank.org

Schuler Family Foundation

The Schuler Scholar Program, through enrichment and academic programs, guidance and scholarships, prepares high potential students to succeed at selective colleges. Members deliver educational programs, coordinate and chaperone Scholar outings, work one-on-one with Scholars and families, and usually become a role model for the Scholars.



www.schulerfoundation.org

Springfield Urban League, Inc.

The Springfield Urban League AmeriCorps Program will address the needs plaguing our community by providing six activities: (1) Tutoring, (2) Mentoring, (3) Literacy instruction, (4) Service-learning projects, (5) Pre-Apprenticeship Training and (6) Summer Interns.



www.springfieldul.org

Urbana Champaign Independent Media Center (UCIMC)

The UCIMC is a grassroots organization committed to using media and arts production, education and distribution as tools for promoting social and economic justice. UCIMC fosters the creation of news, programs, art and narratives by community members whose perspectives are not represented by the dominant media.



www.ucimc.org

West Suburban PADS

AmeriCorps Members will staff a new initiative, the Career Passport and Housing Program, which is designed to support and prepare homeless persons to successfully transition into mainstream employment and housing. Clients gain insight into their strengths and challenges through intensive work related therapy and life skill education.



www.westsuburbanpads.org

TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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In addition to the searchable portal of over 60,000 volunteer opportunities statewide, *Serve.Illinois.gov* hosts a wide variety of volunteer resources:

- AmeriCorps/National Service Information:
www.serve.illinois.gov/national_service/
- Volunteerism Research and Publications:
www.serve.illinois.gov/volunteerism/Trends.htm
- Statewide Volunteer Management Network:
www.serve.illinois.gov/volunteerism/network/
- Related Nonprofit and Volunteerism Web Links:
www.serve.illinois.gov/links/
- Serve Illinois Calendar of Events:
www.serve.illinois.gov/calendar/

If your agency has upcoming volunteerism or national service events, Web site links or professional development resources for web or newsletter publication, please send it to dhs.serveillinois@illinois.gov for consideration.

Regional Volunteerism Conferences Successful Despite Agencies' Economic Challenges

The Southern Illinois Volunteerism Conference (SIVC) was held September 29, 2009 in Mt. Vernon while the West Central Illinois Volunteerism Conference (WCIVC) was held just a month later on October 29, 2009 in Macomb. These regional volunteerism conferences – partnerships among participants in the Illinois Volunteer Management Network – reached community and agency volunteer leaders through inexpensive day-long training and professional development events.



At SIVC, SIU President Glenn Poshard provided the opening keynote address to the audience of 130 people representing voluntary agencies and associations from Vandalia to Cairo, including the St. Louis Metro-East region.

Angie Wyatt, former WSIL-TV anchor and local children's author, concluded the event. Along with the Serve Illinois Commission, SIVC Steering Committee partners included 20 agency representatives from the region. The 2009 conference was chaired by Jackie Gomez of the Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois. For a complete list of partners and more information about this annual event, please visit www.sivc.net.

At WCIVC, Nora Baldner, Branch Director for the Arthritis Foundation in Quincy, provided the luncheon keynote address to the West Central Illinois audience of nearly 100. Under the leadership of VolunteerNOW–Macomb Area Volunteer Center staff (AmeriCorps*VISTA Members Elizabeth Swisher and Andrea Bell) and Board Member/Serve Illinois Commissioner Nancy Jameson, the WCIVC Conference Planning Partners included 11 other agency representatives from West Central Illinois. For a complete list of partners and more information about this annual event, please visit www.wcivc.net.

Stay tuned for new and growing regional events near you in 2010! Visit *Serve.Illinois.gov* for more information about the Illinois Volunteer Management Network initiative.

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535 W. Jefferson Street, 3rd Floor, Springfield, Illinois 62702
Fax/Email to: 217.557.0515 or DHS.ServeIllinois@Illinois.gov

Upcoming Days of Service

November 19, 2009	World's Largest Thanksgiving Dinner www.goallstars.org
November 21, 2009	Family Volunteer Day disney.go.com/disneyhand/familyvolunteers/
December 5, 2009	International Volunteer Day www.worldvolunteerweb.org/int-l-volunteer-day.html
January 1-31, 2010	National Mentoring Month www.nationalmentoringmonth.org
January 18, 2010	Martin Luther King Jr. Day – “A day ON...not a day off” www.mlkday.gov



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Illinois AmeriCorps Disability Outreach Project: Meeting the needs for AmeriCorps Members of all backgrounds and abilities.

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